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*** BEGIN MESSAGE, 5 ***

SERIAL=BK1907122891 UDA=Z(23453)
CLASS=UNCLAS 4P
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WARNING: ATTN BANGKOK AE
ATTN BANGKOK LOCAL
SERIAL: BK1907122891
PASS: ATTN POL
COUNTRY: THAILAND
SUBJ: SRV ENVOY -- PROSPECT OF LIVING U.S. MIAS UNLIKELY *
SOURCE: HONG KONG AFP IN ENGLISH 1213 GMT 19 JUL 91
TEXT:
((TEXT)) BANGKOK, JULY 19 (AFP) -- VIETNAM'S AMBASSADOR TO THAILAND SAID FRIDAY HE HAD NO IDEA WHETHER A RECENTLY RELEASED PHOTOGRAPH PURPORTING TO SHOW THREE U.S. SERVICEMEN MISSING IN ACTION DURING THE VIETNAM WAR (MIAS) WAS AUTHENTIC. *
HE REITERATED, HOWEVER, HIS GOVERNMENT'S STATED POLICY THAT VIETNAM IS HOLDING NO MISSING AMERICAN SERVICEMEN. *
"I CAN'T IMAGINE THAT THERE ARE ANY AMERICANS (MISSING IN ACTION) * ALIVE IN VIETNAM," AMBASSADOR NGUYEN TRUNG SAID.
THE PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING THREE MALE CAUCASIANS TURNED UP IN ONE OF THE CAMBODIAN REFUGEE CAMPS INSIDE THAILAND BEFORE BEING SENT TO THE UNITED STATES, ACCORDING TO WELL-INFORMED SOURCES HERE.
MR. TRUNG EXPRESSED SYMPATHY FOR THE FAMILIES OF MISSING SERVICEMEN AND SAID THAT MANY VIETNAMESE SERVICEMEN ARE ALSO STILL MISSING.
"EVEN NOW IN VIETNAM WE STILL HAVE THOUSANDS OF MISSING PEOPLE. EVERY DAY THEIR FAMILIES ASK FOR ASSISTANCE IN FINDING THEM," HE SAID.
"WE UNDERSTAND THE PAIN, THE BURDEN WHICH THESE PEOPLE IN THE U.S. (FAMILIES OF MIAS) HAVE TO SUFFER," HE ADDED. *
THE AMBASSADOR SAID VIETNAM CONSIDERED THE MIA ISSUE A * HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM AND HIS COUNTRY HAD DONE ITS BEST TO COOPERATE WITH THE UNITED STATES IN SOLVING IT. "IF THERE IS ANY NEW INFORMATION WE INVESTIGATE IT," HE SAID.
HE ADDED THAT INVESTIGATION TEAMS HAD TRAVELLED THROUGHOUT VIETNAM BUT HAVE FOUND NO EVIDENCE OF ANY LIVING MIAS. *
ACCORDING TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, 2,273 U.S. SERVICEMEN ARE OFFICIALLY MISSING, 1,656 IN VIETNAM, 528 IN LAOS, 83 IN CAMBODIA, * AND SIX IN CHINESE TERRITORIAL WATERS.
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